

States, with diverse habits and prejudices, began to dot the country with thrifty settlements ; but no one of these settlements maintained a ruling influence and gave directions and character to the others, while there was a want of cohesion among the colonies—and no uniformity in their general aim. The principle of individual independence, and of opposition to central influence, and absorption was developed to a great extent for that era ; and these characteristics of our early settlements furnish the key to all our after history, clearly indicating the origin of a good principle carried here to injurious extremes. When centralizing power and authority did come, they were not of a character to give the people a distaste for the unquestionable evils growing out of their former somewhat patriarchal state ; the power came from those who imposed it with a view solely to the interests of the governing few, and was thus too selfish even to promote its own ends. The Proprietaries of Carolina, reaping only trouble and disaster, from their unwise attempts to reduce the people to a race of homogenous servants, transferred their authority and interests to the Crown of Great Britain ; and the new sovereign, not superior to the narrow policy of that day, was not much more happy in its experiments. There was a sort of general Government, and a few necessary regulations concerning the general safety, and the administration of justice between man and man, were enforced ; but the central power was mostly felt, not in efforts to mould the masses into a united population in pursuit of the public good, but in the executions and oppressions of its officers, and its multiplied inventions for extortion.

The officers of the law were felt to be “not the ministers of God for good, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil,” but a set of self seekers, wholly disregarding of popular feelings, rights and interests—in fact were a swarm of devouring locusts that came “warping on the